DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

June 27, 1994

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-17-94

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADOPTION
AGENCIES
CDSS ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL
[ ] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order or Settlement Agreement
[X] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[ ] Initiated by SDSS

SUBJECT: FOSTER CARE INFORMATION SYSTEM CASE CLOSURE WHEN THE CHILD IS ADOPTED

This letter is to remind child welfare and adoption staff of the need both to 1) close a child's Foster Care Information System (FCIS) case when a court dependent child's adoption is finalized and 2) state the correct termination date and reason.

For purposes of program budgeting and management as well as responding to requests for statistical information, the department needs to receive timely, accurate foster care case closure reports for cases where adoption is the reason for case closure. Also among the uses made of FCIS data are ongoing studies by social researchers, including the University of California, Berkeley, School of Social Welfare, regarding foster care outcomes. Our ability to meet these needs is seriously impaired by what appears to be a significant underreporting on the FCIS of case closures due to adoption. This problem has been discussed extensively at meetings of the Adoptions Subcommittee of the County Welfare Directors Association. This letter is in follow-up to agreements reached during those discussions regarding means of improving data reporting.

When the family's petition to adopt the child is granted and the child's court dependency is terminated, the person responsible for completing the FCIS documents should complete a "Foster Child's Data Record and AFDC-FC Certification" (SOC 158) form showing that the case is being closed because the child has been adopted. Four fields on the form must be completed as follows:

A.1. Date of Submittal - Enter the current date.
A.2. Transaction - Enter "Change" (Code 04).
G.5. Foster Care Termination Date - Enter the date the adoption was granted.
G.6. Foster Care Termination Reason - Enter either:
04 - Adoptive Placement with Relative,
05 - Adoptive Placement with Nonrelative, or
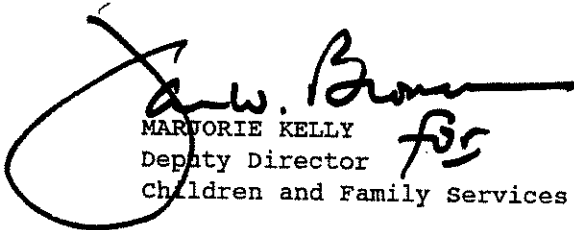06 - Adoptive Placement with Former Foster Family
Note: All adoptions by relatives should be coded 04 even though the relative had been a relative foster parent to the child prior to adoptive placement.

The SOC 158 should be completed as described above at the time the adoption petition is granted, not at the time the child is placed for adoption.

Finally, if agencies become aware of cases on the FCIS where an adoption was completed but the SOC 158 was either not submitted for closure or submitted using an incorrect termination code, the following action is necessary:

1) Cases still open on FCIS:
   Submit the SOC 158 with the correct adoption termination code, as referenced previously.

2) Cases closed on FCIS:
   Submit the SOC 158 with a "c" in the "Cor" box for Item G-5-6 along with the correct adoption termination date and reason.

If you need assistance completing the child's SOC 158 or identifying the status of a case on the FCIS, please contact your FCIS analyst Winnie Barber at (916) 653-6350 or Kathy Vaughn at (916) 653-6480. If you have adoptions program questions, please contact Joseph Magruder, Adoptions Policy Consultant, at (916) 323-0524.

MARJORIE KELLY
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services

c: CWDA